



MARAD Update



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9/11 Heroes

By Bill McDonald, North Atlantic Region



U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta presenting specially authorized medals from the U.S. Department of Transportation to New York and New Jersey maritime industry members. Joining the Secretary on stage are (front row, left to right) RADM Craig E. Bone, USCG, Director of Port Security, Maritime Safety, Security, and Environmental Protection Directorate; and VADM Vivien S. Crea, USCG, Commander, Atlantic Area and U.S. Maritime Defense Zone, Atlantic. Also shown are (back row, left to right) Capt. John Katan, Marine Division, New York City Fire Department; and Deputy Chief John Bley, Division 1, New York City Fire Department.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta awarded specially authorized medals from the U.S. Department of Transportation to more than 700 members of the New York and New Jersey maritime industry who risked their lives to evacuate more than 500,000 persons from Lower Manhattan on September 11, 2001. Secretary Mineta was the keynote speaker at a ceremony honoring the maritime industry for saving lives on 9/11, and for establishing a supply lifeline bringing equipment and emergency personnel to Ground Zero in the days following the attack on the World Trade Center. This waterborne evacuation of Lower Manhattan was the largest rescue operation of its kind in our nation's history. With bridges and tunnels closed and subway lines shut down, the waterways provided the only escape route for thousands of citizens in distress.

More than 500 industry leaders attended this historic recognition ceremony held at the World Financial Center in Lower Manhattan. The ceremony was a fitting tribute to everyday heroes who responded within minutes to the Captain of the Port's call for "all available boats" on 9/11. The Maritime Administration's North Atlantic Region Director Bob McKeon and Maritime Program Specialist Bill McDonald were members of the organizing committee and participated in the event.

— All Hands on Deck — The Adopt-A-Ship Program NEEDS You!

By Alex Landsburg, Coordinator of Research and Development

The "Adopt A Ship" Program provides the opportunity for a fifth- through eighth-grade classroom to establish ties with a ship of the American Merchant Marine and exchange correspondence with the crewmembers. Since the late 1990's, the Maritime Administration (MARAD), through a joint effort with the Propeller Club of the United States (Propeller Club), has been helping with the administrative efforts for this program. The Adopt-A-Ship Program is an effective way to educate children, parents, and teachers about the maritime industry. It also has a GREAT ability to inspire our youth to learn and become more aware on a personal basis of so many exciting things that are happening around them. This truly invaluable program needs your help in involving more volunteer ships and teachers to really make a difference!

The original purpose of the program was to inform young Americans about the maritime industry and the need for an educated American Merchant Marine, embracing not only the fleet of ocean and coastal vessels, but also those on navigable rivers, lakes, bays, and sounds, as well as harbor craft. While using the marine industry as a focus, the program is excellent in fostering interests in geography, history, transportation (foreign and domestic trade), science, math, and English.

In essence, an adopted ship offers the classroom teacher a wonderful tool with which to engage and interest students. Almost as an aside, the program provides to the students, their parents, and the teacher an understanding of the maritime industry, its importance, and possible careers that might be pursued. The experience of communicating with the ship is able to excite youth about what is being taught and inspires them through a more personal connection to their studies, which can often appear to be highly abstract and not part of real life.

The program is essentially a pen pal relationship between the students and those aboard the ship and not really difficult to support. Once a month, the class writes to the master of the ship, and once a month the master responds with answers and discusses where the ship is currently located and shares common shipboard experiences with the class. When a class letter pertains to a particular shipboard department, it is generally answered by those in charge of the department. However, all correspondence from the ship is usually supervised and signed by the captain and sent to the class in care of the teacher responsible for the school project. The adoption and its communications essentially enable bringing real ongoing activities into classroom discussions of various curriculum studies.

MARAD and the Propeller Club are very concerned with having a continuing supply of inspired and well-educated maritime professionals. There is the opportunity for engaging many more teachers to volunteer their classes to adopt ships and the need for many more ship operators and mariners to volunteer their ships for adoption. The time is now to make everyone aware of this great program and expand its effectiveness!

MARAD employees and others in the industry harbor a vast wealth of maritime experiences with which to inspire and educate our youth of today. American school children are not familiar with career opportunities in the American Merchant Marine and related industries. Spending some time to visit a classroom that has adopted a ship can really contribute to this experience and help the teacher truly bring the youth alive to learning and the exciting things that happen in our industry. A transportation example with all of the ingredients of time, distance, speed, geography, and communications when taken into a classroom with a real person and with connections to actual mariners and their ships can really make the classroom experiences even more relevant!

Please spread the word about this great program by talking with friends and acquaintances about how invaluable the Adopt-A-Ship Program is to teachers and our youth. It is really a very worthwhile effort that should be much more widespread. Information about the program can be found on the MARAD website at http://www.marad.dot.gov/education/adopt_a_ship/, or contact Sharon LeGrand at sharon.legrand@dot.gov.



Betty Coerber, Evans Elementary School in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, receiving an award from Capt. Jim Robinson on behalf of The Propeller Club of the United States for her extensive efforts in promoting the Adopt-a-Ship Program at Evans for the past 29 years.

From Betty Coerber, Evans Elementary School, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin—

Adopt-A-Ship: Motivating, Enriching, Challenging

Students at Evans Elementary School in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, recently celebrated 29 years in the Adopt-A-Ship Program. The Adopt-A-Ship Program has been a mainstay for us all these 29 years. It provides an experience the shipmates (the students) carry with them throughout their lives.

Although most students at Evans School have never been aboard ship, they are well-versed in nautical terms, navigation problems, storms at sea, trade routes, imports, exports, cargo handling, and the history, geography, economics, climate, education, and culture of the countries and ports of call their vessels have visited.

The shipmates love corresponding with their adopted ship, her officers, and crew. Not infrequently, I have been told by the shipmates, "I have been waiting since kindergarten to become a shipmate." Graduates of the Adopt-A-Ship Program at Evans consider it a highlight of their educational career. Parents enrolling their kindergarten children will inquire of our principal, James Botting, about the program, stating it is "an experience they so enjoyed they'd like it for their children."

The Program motivates, enriches, and teaches in a way that can't be accomplished by ordinary textbooks. At Evans we have used the correspondence from our adopted ship captains and officers in every subject area across the curriculum from the core subjects to fine arts and technology.

The shipmates' faces beam with pride and excitement upon learning that we have an e-mail or a package from our captain. In a matter of minutes, our excitement and joy are relayed to the whole school. Shortly, students will be seen pouring over encyclopedias, atlases, and other reference books to help them solve the research problem the captain sent. Not too long ago, they even involved their parents with the math problem sent by the captain, "How many top-quality tulip bulbs can be carried in a 40-foot container?"

The excitement goes on and on each day as the shipmates discuss and plot the ship's course on our classroom map. I often wish the captain and 2nd officers could hear these discussions. They would beam with pride on what their shipmates ashore have learned from their letters and are now practicing.

The program also has stimulated the shipmates to take a keen interest in world events and happenings in countries where our ship calls. Upon hearing in the news that some ship libraries needed help, the Evans shipmates had an all-school paperback book collection to send on to the ship. They collected thousands of paperbacks and got our entire city involved to help with the expenses involved.

For many of the shipmates today, the interest conveyed in the letters and e-mails provides them with a sense of importance and self-worth that motivates them to do their best each day. Their captain truly cares about them and has made them feel very special. I recall a shipmate telling me, "This is the first letter I ever received in my whole life." The desire to participate in the program has motivated incoming shipmates who in previous years spent many hours on the bench outside the principal's office to be exemplary students and model citizens.

The learning, the challenges of nautical math and charting, the sea lore, the nautical poetry and sea chanteys, down to learning the importance and rewards of written communication have made the Adopt-A-Ship Program memorable and never to be forgotten by the Evans shipmates.

While the captain and officers on the ship share their experiences at sea and answer countless questions, the shipmates share their interests, experiences, school life, and daily joys and sorrows in return. Not infrequently they ask for solutions to problems such as "How can I explain detention to my parents to escape being grounded?" or "Could you help me with some answers for my Social Studies/Science project?"

As our ship made its way around the world each year, we did a culminating activity to share back what we learned from her traversing the seven seas and many different ports of call and countries of the world. The shipmates became ecstatic upon learning that their captains would, in fact, really come and visit for their culminating activity. All hands were on deck after school, before school, at recess, and even on weekends to build and paint stage props, scenery, or whatever was needed for the program. Speaking parts were memorized, practiced, and polished. The excitement of meeting, visiting with, and entertaining their captain ashore was an unforgettable experience for all.

From the Deputy Maritime Administrator—



I recently had the honor to address the American Sail Training Association (ASTA) as the keynote speaker at their 33rd annual conference in Bay City, Michigan.

I was privileged to acknowledge the long and close association between MARAD and ASTA and to recognize the importance of our combined mission—a mission to bring up the next generation of maritime leaders.

ASTA was founded in 1973, by Barclay Warburton, III, of Newport, Rhode Island. He was so inspired by the enthusiasm and spirit he saw in an international gathering of tall ships and young people, he set out to create a similar organization in order to bring the same kind of spirit to the United States.

ASTA is dedicated to enriching youth education through character building and leadership development experiences aboard tall ships and promoting awareness of the need for maritime heritage preservation programs. It is this kind of hands-on learning that can open minds and souls to the call of the sea and lead young people to opportunities for life-long careers in the maritime industry.

MARAD supports maritime training and education through the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, six state maritime academies, and several outreach and continuing education programs. Recently, we implemented an awareness campaign to introduce youth to career and employment opportunities in the maritime industry. MARAD's Ship Operations Cooperative Program and its Mariner Recruitment Working Group have been instrumental in producing print and electronic promotional material while also visiting schools, career fairs, and conferences to promote careers at sea.

Clearly, it is crucial that we promote sail training to the North American public and that we support and develop education opportunities under sail.

After all, we are a maritime nation—a nation whose history is directly tied to magnificent tall ships.

MARAD shares ASTA's commitment and dedication to the maritime industry. And I am pledging our full and continued support to them as we work together in the adventurous spirit of maritime enterprise that has helped to build this mighty nation.

John Jamian

MARAD Update

The ***MARAD Update*** is published by the Maritime Administration's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs. This publication is available to all individuals regardless of age, race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation. For more information or to submit questions or concerns, telephone (202) 366-5807, visit the MARAD website at www.marad.dot.gov, or e-mail pao.marad@dot.gov.

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